

Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
June 27, 2017

Members Present

Amy Porterfield, Chair
Bob Kresmer*
Ted Chittenden*
Ed Gervasoni*
Dan Martinez*
Jeff Bishop*
Nikki Jeffords*
Donald Porterfield*

Members Absent

Tom Hicks

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers, Admin Asst.
*Teleconferenced

Guests Present

Call to Order and Introductions

Amy Porterfield, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm in the Council Staff Office, Phoenix, AZ. Introductions were made and a quorum was present.

Approval of June 2, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Bob Kresmer moved to approve the minutes of the June 2, 2017 Executive Committee meeting. Ted Chittenden seconded the motion. The meeting minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

Policy and Legislative Update

Amy Porterfield stated Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) requested feedback from the GCBVI regarding Pre-Employment Transition Services policies. Ms. Porterfield stated the Legislation and Public Policy Committee reviewed the policies and provided feedback to Kristen Mackey, RSA Administrator. Amy Porterfield stated the committee offered suggested changes to the Policy that included a Threshold Guideline that would not violate regulations. Amy Porterfield stated the council expressed concern that the Threshold Guidelines could potentially be interpreted as a cap on services.

Amy Porterfield stated she inquired whether the Department of Economic Security (DES) Office of Procurement could provide the Legislation that gave exemption to RSA to purchase services for clients compared to the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) exemptions. Amy Porterfield stated Shelia Hoppe, Office of Procurement, indicated that Procurement did not follow Legislation, but did adhere to Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) regulations, which would allow purchase exemptions based on individual client cases. Amy Porterfield stated she requested the DDD exemptions for comparison with the option to discuss with consumer groups and Legislation. She added that DDD identified about 27 vendors that were considered qualified vendors, and the division was then able to develop open Purchase Orders with those vendors. Amy Porterfield stated the delegated authority document described the authority that Purchasing Technicians (PTS) had and could purchase items or services up to \$5000. Dan Martinez inquired regarding Amy Porterfield's concerns regarding the comparable benefits included in the Pre-ETS policies. Amy Porterfield stated she wanted to ensure that the comparable benefits were comparable benefits for individuals receiving specialized services. She noted that One-Stop locations offered resume writing services, although the One-Stop locations were not able to assist clients with using JAWS to create and edit their resumes adequately. Amy Porterfield stated the committee wanted to ensure that the comparable benefits offered provided quality training to blind and visually impaired clients. Ed Gervasoni stated some clients attended Helen Keller National Center (HKNC) for Orientation and Mobility (O&M) training and returned to their homes and were unable to navigate effectively. Amy Porterfield stated if a client was only sent to one center for blindness services, that client might not receive adequate services due to a cap on services. Amy Porterfield stated her concern that counselors would not understand that the Threshold Guidelines were to offer guidelines for services costs and were not intended to be a cap on services.

Strategic Plan Meeting Discussion

Amy Porterfield stated the Executive Committee had agreed on the Strategic Planning date of August 11, 2017 to be held at the Business Enterprise Program (BEP) conference room. Amy Porterfield stated Ed House had agreed to facilitate the Strategic Plan meeting and wanted to ensure that he was able to facilitate the meeting that best met the needs of the council. Amy Porterfield stated RSA was unable to offer a stipend for the facilitator of the meeting, and she intended to inquire whether the Office of Boards and Commissions could offer any guidance on offering a stipend.

GCBVI Membership Review

Amy Porterfield stated Roy Stinson had expressed interest in serving on the council as a representative from the Blinded Veteran's Association (BVA). Amy Porterfield stated she met with Dawn Wallace, Policy Advisor of Education to the Governor, and noted Ms. Wallace was not aware that community members were advocating for blind and visually impaired students outside of the Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind (ASDB). Amy Porterfield stated Dawn Wallace's understanding was that ADSB had moved away from educational outcomes and Annette Reichman, Superintendent ASDB, was interested in focusing on student outcomes. Amy Porterfield stated Ms. Wallace stated she had no authority over the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) although she could recommend Amy Porterfield contact the ADE Director. Amy Porterfield stated the ADE Director suggested Ms. Porterfield contact the Director of Low Incidence Disabilities to set up a meeting to discuss potential council representation from the ADE. Amy Porterfield stated Dawn Wallace indicated that she was not aware of the policies and processes within the ADE. Ted Chittenden inquired whether Amy Porterfield expressed concerns regarding the AZ Merit tests administered to blind and visually impaired students. Amy Porterfield stated she did express concerns regarding the tests, and noted that Ms. Wallace suggested the council contact the ADE Director. Amy Porterfield stated the council was interested in developing Best Practices for testing accessibility and Dawn Wallace indicated that she would support any guidelines or communication regarding any training. Bob Kresmer inquired regarding Dawn Wallace's title. Amy Porterfield stated Dawn Wallace was the Policy Advisor of Education to the Governor, and her main contact was with the DES Director.

Amy Porterfield stated at the previous Executive Committee, the committee discussed engaging council members that were not as involved on the council. Bob Kresmer stated he contacted Bea Shapiro, who indicated that she was not able to Chair the Assistive Technology (AT) Committee. Ed Gervasoni stated he asked whether Bea Shapiro would be willing to join the Committee on Deaf-Blind Issues. Mr. Gervasoni stated Ms. Shapiro expressed interest in serving on the committee although she was unsure whether she could attend the committee meetings in person. Amy Porterfield stated the Executive Committee had also discussed potential committees that Allan Curry and Mike Kanitsch could join. Ted Chittenden stated he would contact Mike Kanitsch regarding Mr. Kanitsch's interest in joining a GCBVI committee.

GCBVI Town Hall Meeting Discussion

Ted Chittenden stated the Public Information Committee drafted a Public Announcement regarding the Town Hall portion of the GCBVI Full Council meeting and had distributed the announcement to some of the consumer groups. Amy Porterfield suggested the Public Information Committee forward the announcement to Donald Porterfield for distribution on the National Federation of the Blind of Arizona (NFBA) list serve. Amy Porterfield stated the vendors offering blindness services should receive the announcement as well. Amy Porterfield stated she would discuss the parameters of the Town Hall meeting and be open to hearing feedback and concerns from the community and to be clear regarding what the council could and could not do. Jeff Bishop inquired whether the Full Council meeting would be recorded and potentially made accessible on the DES GCBVI website. Mr. Bishop suggested posting the minutes online in order to increase visibility of the council and the consumer groups. Amy Porterfield inquired whether the council meeting recording could be added to the DES website. Lindsey Powers stated she would inquire whether the meeting recording could be added to the DES GCBVI website. Jeff Bishop stated he would be willing to edit the recording if needed prior to posting on the website.

Ed Gervasoni stated Mary Hartle had agreed to act as the representative for the Committee on Deaf-Blind Issues. Dan Martinez suggested the council offer Comment Cards at the GCBVI Full Council meeting for individuals that preferred to write down their comments. Amy Porterfield stated the council would need to provide Braille writers and paper for individuals as well. Nikki Jeffords inquired whether members from the community could attend any of the videoconference sites. Ted Chittenden stated the Public Announcement listed all of the videoconference site addresses for individuals wanting to attend remotely. Amy Porterfield suggested the council ensure that all videoconference sites were staffed. Ed Gervasoni suggested someone also act as a scribe and assist individuals with filling out their comment cards.

American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) Event Update

Nikki Jeffords stated she spoke to Kirk Adams, AFB President, regarding a breakfast or lunch sponsored by the Foundation for Blind Children (FBC). Ms. Jeffords stated Mr. Adams had partnered with the Business Leadership Network (BLN) and was interested in inviting key leaders in blindness and BLN representatives to attend the event. Amy Porterfield inquired whether the GCBVI needed to support the event. Nikki Jeffords stated the council did not need to offer support, and noted she would inquire regarding the invitee list for the event.

GCBVI Full Council Agenda Discussion

Amy Porterfield inquired regarding the items that should be included on the Full Council agenda for the upcoming meeting on July 21, 2017. Ted Chittenden suggested the agenda focus on Committee Reports so that community members could hear about the committee's activities. Ed Gervasoni suggested the state organizations such as ASDB summarize their activities briefly and allow the Committee Chairs to discuss the highlights of their reports submitted for inclusion in the GCBVI Annual Report. Ted Chittenden stated the Public Information Committee received all Committee reports with the exception of the AT Committee. Mr. Chittenden stated he did not anticipate completing the Annual Report until the August Full Council meeting. Dan Martinez stated the Committee Chairs could speak briefly about their reports, and suggested the Council Chair discuss the council's positions in different areas.

Jeff Bishop inquired whether Ed Gervasoni would still be willing to serve as the Chair of the AT Committee until a new Chair had been appointed. Ed Gervasoni stated he would be willing to serve as the AT Committee Chair, although he would be out of the country during the Full Council meeting in July. Nikki Jeffords inquired whether Jeff Bishop could prepare a brief AT Committee report, which could be read by Amy Porterfield at the July Full Council meeting. Jeff Bishop stated he would prepare a report and submit to the AT Committee and Amy Porterfield for review. Amy Porterfield stated she would present the AT Committee report at the Full Council meeting with assistance from AT Committee members at the meeting.

Amy Porterfield inquired regarding the activities of the Education Committee. Bob Kresmer stated the Education Committee developed workgroups that focused on early childhood, K-12, and post-secondary education. Mr. Kresmer stated that he, Amy Porterfield, Lisa Yencarelli, and Jeff Bishop met with Annette Reichman and Penny Rosenblum regarding the development of an Advisory Council for the ASDB. Bob Kresmer stated during the meeting Annette Reichman indicated that she was interested in ensuring that the AZ Merit tests were accessible for students. He noted that Ms. Reichman also stated that ASDB had requested \$800,000 in additional funds for infant through kindergarten early childhood education. Amy Porterfield suggested the Education Committee highlight the concerns of the committee so that the community was aware that the council was concerned regarding education.

Amy Porterfield inquired regarding the information that Kristen Mackey and Rich Sorey, Services for the Blind Visually Impaired and Deaf (SBVID)

Program Manager should provide at the July Full Council meeting. Dan Martinez stated Kristen Mackey and Rich Sorey could provide a brief presentation regarding their positions and any of their concerns. Nikki Jeffords stated she would be interested in hearing an update regarding the comprehensive services contracts. Amy Porterfield stated she could request an update regarding the comprehensive services contracts, although she was unsure whether the agenda would allow for sufficient discussion regarding the contracts. Ms. Porterfield stated RSA could discuss where the agency was in the process of the contracts during the July meeting, and potentially expand on the discussion at the September Full Council meeting.

Agenda and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on July 28, 2017 from 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm in the RSA Conference Room, Phoenix, AZ. Agenda items are as follows:

- Policy and Legislative Update
- Strategic Plan Meeting Discussion
- GCBVI Town Hall Meeting Discussion

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Public Comment

A call to the public was made with no responses forthcoming.

Adjournment of Meeting

Bob Kresmer moved to adjourn the meeting. Ted Chittenden seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 1:57 pm.